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# Abraham Lincoln a Spiritualist



LECTURE BY  
MRS. M. E. WILLIAMS, F. I. A. Sc.



## Facts Indisputable

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# **ABRAHAM LINCOLN, A SPIRITUALIST.**

By Mrs. M. E. Williams

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On Sunday evening, Feb. 10, Mrs. M. E. Williams lectured for the First Spiritualist Church of New York. The subject was "Abraham Lincoln, a Spiritualist." The largest assemblage of people ever gathered in that church, filled the auditorium, overflowing into the anterooms until further standing room could not be found. Mrs. Williams gave extraordinary information concerning Abraham Lincoln's introduction into Spiritualism. She handled her subject in a masterly and convincing manner, proving conclusively that during the Civil War President Lincoln attended the seance held at the home of Wm. Laurie of Washington, D. C., where he was thoroughly convinced of the truth of spirit return, after which he engaged Miss Nettie C. Coburn (who was a well known lecturer and trance medium) to come to the White House, where she resided during the war, giving seances daily to Mr. and Mrs. Lincoln and members of his cabinet. Through communications from the higher life Mr. Lincoln was repeatedly requested to abolish slavery and

told the war would not cease until he proclaimed the emancipation of the slaves, after which the Union force would not suffer defeat.

The lecture was a very remarkable one, and Mrs. Williams stated that the facts presented were all a matter of record and well authenticated, and it would give her pleasure to present copies of the same to our papers and magazines.

The round of continuous applause showed the appreciation of a most intelligent audience.

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The following is taken from the original copy:

## HOW LINCOLN CAME TO ISSUE HIS EMANCIPATION PROCLAMATION

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### Col. Kase's Strange Narrative

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### A Little Girl's Prophetic Utterances While in a Trance

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### Singular Scene in the White House

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A *Mercury* representative, one evening last week, listened to a remarkable story regarding the spiritualistic belief of Abraham Lincoln and the effect which spiritual force had upon the conception and issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation. The story was told by Colonel S. P. Kase, of Philadelphia, the millionaire railroad builder and close personal friend of the martyr President. At the close of the seance by Mrs. Williams, that lady said to Colonel Kase that before he died he should leave some record behind him of his personal knowledge of Mr. Lincoln's belief in Spiritualism and the guidance which Mr. Lincoln acknowledged he received through spiritualistic channels, during the stormy and perplexing days of the Civil War.

"Yes," Colonel Kase responded, "I have

often thought of that, and will now give it to you for your *Beacon Light*." Mrs. Williams' amanuensis took down the Colonel's story, and she kindly furnished the *Mercury* representative with an advance copy.

"To answer your question in brief," Colonel Kase began, "I believe that President Lincoln was induced, by the knowledge received through Spiritualism, to issue his Proclamation of Emancipation. My knowledge on that subject is extensive. I had occasion to visit Washington in 1862 on railroad business. Arriving early in the afternoon, I took a walk down Pennsylvania Avenue to the Capitol grounds. Passing a house near the grounds where I had formerly boarded, I saw the name of H. Conkling on the door. Mrs. Reeves had evidently moved away. I knew Conkling to be a writing medium. As I looked at the house a voice alongside of me said, 'Go in and see him. He is in the same room you used to occupy.' I had no power to move forward. I felt that I must enter the house and I did. As I entered the room Conkling was sitting in a corner and was in the act of sealing a letter. He at once said, 'Mr. Kase, I want you to carry this letter to the President. You can see him but I cannot.' I observed, 'I cannot take your letter: send it by mail.' He said, 'You must take it to him, otherwise he will not see it.' I replied, 'I can't take your letter, as I am not acquainted with the President and I am on important business and want to be introduced to him

under different auspices than delivering a letter I know nothing about.' Immediately the voice behind me said, 'Go see what will become of this.' It was the same voice that I had heard upon the street. My mind changed instantly. I said, 'I will go if you will go along, too. Give me the letter.' Conkling said, 'I cannot see him but you can.' All this time Conkling remained in an abnormal state. We arrived at the White House about dusk. I rang the bell and a servant opened the door.

"The President was at tea, but would see me after that. When we had entered the parlor, Conkling said, 'I cannot see him, but you can.' Presently the servant came to the door and invited me forward. He opened the door of the President's room. The President was coming forward to meet me, but as he saw me he drew back, apparently a little frightened." (It might be said that Colonel Kase is a perfect image of George Washington and his resemblance to the first President may have forcibly struck Mr. Lincoln.) "I remarked, 'This is the President, Mr. Lincoln, I presume.' He hesitated, but finally said, 'Yes.' I said 'My name is S. P. Kase, of Danville, Pennsylvania.' 'Oh,' he remarked, 'you are from Pennsylvania. Be seated.' I took a chair on one side of the table, he on the other. Mr. Lincoln began to draw me out about Pennsylvania and the then condition of things there. We discussed politics and the war question for half an hour. I found him very affable and

agreeable. I handed him the Conkling letter and after reading it he looked at me and said, ‘What does this mean?’ I answered, ‘I do not know, Mr. President, but I presume it means just what it says.’

“He again read it over to himself very carefully and said again, ‘What can this mean,’ I reiterated what I had said. ‘You think it means what it says, but do not know its contents,’ he said, to which I smilingly said I thought so. ‘Well, sir,’ he observed, ‘I will read it to you,’ which he did. The letter read:

“‘I have been sent from the City of New York by spiritual influences, to confer with you pertaining to the interests of the nation. I cannot return until I have an interview. Please appoint the time. Yours, etc.

‘H. B. Conkling.’

“The President turned to me and said: ‘What do you know about Spiritualism?’ ‘I know but very little, sir,’ I replied, ‘but what I know you are welcome to.’ Mr. Lincoln seemed much interested in the narrative of my experiences. He said, ‘Tell Conkling I will see him from nine until ten o’clock on Sunday.’ I said, ‘Please, Mr. President, write him a letter,’ and he replied, ‘yes, I will write him.’ I then left. I wrote a memorial and bill for the railroad I was interested in and got a favorable report from the committee on roads and canals. I was standing in the gallery feel-

ing well satisfied with the results of my railroad mission when an old lady approached me and handed me a card saying, 'Call any time it will suit you.' I was surprised, but took the card. The old lady was Mrs. Laurie, of Georgetown, and I learned from Judge Wattles, who was standing close by, that she was a spiritualist. The judge and I called that night about eight o'clock and who should we meet but the President and Mrs. Lincoln.

"Mr. Lincoln shook hands with me very cordially and we entered into conversation. This was about four weeks after I had given him Conkling's letter. Soon I observed a young girl come walking towards the President from the other end of the large parlor. I had not noticed her in the room previously. Her eyes were closed and she was stroking her chin. She came up close to the knee of the President and said: 'Sir, you were called to the position you occupy for a very great purpose. The world is universally in bondage. It must be physically set free so that it may mentally rise to its proper status. There is a spiritual congress supervising the affairs of this nation as well as a congress at Washington. This republic will lead the van of republics throughout the world.'

"This was a text upon which she lectured the President for a full hour and a half, dwelling strongly on the importance of the emancipation of the slaves, saying that the war could not end unless slavery was abol-

ished. Among other things she prophesied that from the time of the issuing of the emancipation proclamation there would be no reverses to the Union armies. I never listened to a lecture so grand and sublime and so full of thought as this delivered by a little girl, who must have been under deep control of the spirit of some ancient philosopher. The President listened with the greatest attention throughout her discourse.

"It was a scene that could never be erased from the mind, bringing to mind the passage in the Scriptures where the head of the nation was being taught wisdom by babes and sucklings. The girl woke up out of her trance condition and, frightened at the thought of speaking before the President, ran off. Then the piano began to play and looking in that direction I saw Mrs. Laurie's daughter playing, with her eyes closed, apparently entranced. The piano rose up and beat the time of the tune played on it. When she had played the tune I asked the privilgee of sitting on the instrument that I might be able to verify to the world that it moved to the tune of the music. She observed, at once: 'You may get on the piano and as many more as you think proper.' Judge Wattles' two soldiers, who came with the President and myself, got on it. She began to play and the instrument commenced to move up and down with all four of us on it. Its motion was so violent that we got off it and stood alongside till she played out the tune. The President sat looking at us all through this performance, apparently much interested. About eleven o'clock we all returned to our respective homes. Two evenings following I went to Mrs. Laurie's where I again met the President and Mrs. Lincoln. The President was again lectured by the little girl and the instrument was played as before

stated. Sufficient be it to say that within some three or four weeks after these manifestations and interviews President Lincoln issued his Emancipation Proclamation, to take effect on January 1, 1863, so that I am fully assured within my own mind that the various spiritual manifestations witnessed, together with information received on the subject, fully convinced President Lincoln of the necessity of issuing his great Proclamation. It is well, however, to refer to the prophecies made by the little girl, saying the war could not end unless slavery was abolished and that no reverses should occur to the Union armies after the Emancipation Proclamation was promulgated. I believe we had twenty-six battles after this great event and were all successful on the Union side, except possibly one or two unimportant skirmishes. You may think this a rather tedious detail of my knowledge on this point, but in order to be truthful and to hand it down as it actually occurred, I conceived it necessary to be explicit in my details of facts connected with such a great historical event."

Colonel Kase added that when Mrs. Lincoln was put into an asylum as insane, because she claimed to hear spirit voices, he wrote to the son, Robert Lincoln, then Secretary of the Interior, and told him about his mother's Spiritualism and that she was a medium, and stated that if he (the son) left her in the asylum he would be responsible for any harm that should happen to her. Four days after he wrote this letter Mrs. Lincoln was removed from the asylum by order of Robert Lincoln.

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## *Mrs. Nettie Coburn Maynard*

We learn from the *New York Sun* of Sunday last that a very important materialization seance was held at the residence of Mrs. Maynard in White Pains, N. Y., on Friday, April 3rd, 1891, under remarkable circumstances. It is as follows:

"The scene," say the reporter, "was the sick room in which Mrs. Nettie Coburn Maynard, the once famous medium and now the wife of the postmaster of White Plains, has been confined to her bed for nearly ten years, a helpless and suffering, but patient, invalid.

"For most of this time she has been engaged in dictating to an amanuensis a book containing an account of her seances in Washington with Lincoln, Seward, Stanton and Chase during the critical period of the nation's history.

"It is well known among those who know Lincoln at all intimately that the emancipation proclamation was issued by direction of a spirit said to have been that of Webster speaking through Nettie Coburn, as she was then known. For two years, from 1863 to 1865, Mrs. Maynard was engaged exclusively by President Lincoln, and made her home in the White House, where she gave the President seances almost daily.

"Careful notes were kept of all those important communications, and the book was completed and put into the hands of Dr. S. B. Brittan for publication several years ago. He died soon afterward and the manuscript was lost. Mrs. Maynard heroically set to work to rewrite the history, having, as she says, been assured that she would be assisted by her spirit friends and kept alive until the task was finished.

"To verify certain dates and other details, Mrs. Maynard has, during the progress of the work, consulted the spirit of Lincoln and other spirits. During the last two years, while she has been lying in exactly the same position on her bed, her hands and feet twisted terribly by rheumatism, she has been further favored by the visits of Mrs. M. E. Williams of this city, through whose mediumship the shades of the invalid's departed friends visited her in visible and tangible shape, bringing her strength and counsel. The last of these seances was held yesterday in the sick chamber of the cozy house in White Plains.

"The 'cabinet' consisted of an impromptu arrangement of curtains of soft black woolen stuff drawn across one corner of the room. Those who were privileged to be present were Henry J. Newton, General and Mrs. Wentworth, Mr. and Mrs. Benjamin B. Hill, Charles Quimby, Mrs. Coburn, Mrs. Marble, W. E. Hardtauft, and the reporter. These occupied chairs arranged around two sides of the room.

"The medium took her seat behind the curtains about three o'clock, and, despite some fear expressed by her as to the effects of poor conditions as to light, arrangements and sick magnetism the seance that ensued was one of the most remarkable in the history of Spiritualism.

"In the dim red light from a small lamp with colored glass sides, no less than twenty-three different individuals emerged from the cabinet, walked about the room, were recognized as the shades of departed friends, and conversed with Mrs. Maynard and others.

"Those in the circle were singing 'Nearer, My God, to Thee,' when suddenly a form in feminine white drapery appeared, and extended her arms towards the company. It was explained that this was 'Priscilla,' one of the medium's guides who usually appeared first to 'bless the circle.' She faded away as silently as she had come.

"Then the voice of 'Nevernie' a little maiden, well known as the medium's familiar spirit, was heard, followed by that of 'Frank Cushman,' the cabinet spirit. Congressman Somes of Maine, an intimate friend of Lincoln, came out, and walked up to Mrs. Maynard's bedside to give her the precise dates of some events accounted in the latter part of her book which she had been trying in vain for weeks past to remember. The shade of Lincoln, tall, stern, dark and sad looking, appeared for a few

moments, gave Mrs. Maynard assurance as to some details in her story, and promised to control her and communicate more fully and particularly as to these events later.

"Gen. Morgan Chrysler, who commanded the Thirtieth New York Regiment, appeared in his Brigadier's uniform, and was recognized by Mrs. Maynard and her sister, Mrs. Coburn. He reminded them of a certain evening in Washington, twenty years ago, and of a practical joke that occurred, after which they gave him the nickname of 'Duck Legs.'

"Frank Cushman, and his sister Mary appeared together, and greeted the company courteously. Other occasions when two spirits distinctly appeared together were the apparitions of 'Katie Robinson' and 'Axis W. Sprague' in company, and of little 'Nevernie' and a boy named 'Eddie Young,' known to several present when in the flesh.

"Mrs. Coburn, the mother of Mrs. Maynard, came to her sick daughter's bedside and comforted her with voice and touch, as did her sister Julia, who died only two weeks ago. Both conversed earnestly about family matters.

"The other spirits that appeared in quick succession during the two hours of the seance were those of Dr. S. K. Beecher, a cousin of the Rev. Dr. Lyman Beecher, and Mrs. Maynard's old physician, Dr. J. R.

Newton, Dr. Warren, Mrs. Cora Dyes Clough, Bessie Turner, E. V. Wilson, Mr. Clymer, Daniel Hale, of Chicago, Margaret Fuller, authoress, Dr. Cutler, Preston T. Holland, who discoursed briefly on the philosophy of Spiritualism, and last, 'Pinkie' the control of Mrs. Maynard, said to be an Aztec 'princess who lived in Mexico five hundred years ago.' She was radiant in jewels of phosphorescent light that decorated her hair and her dress, and of which she was evidently very proud.

"Dr. Holland's discourse brought the seance to an end. All present expressed their extreme satisfaction with the manifestation, and the invalid, for whom the seance was chiefly given, said she had been greatly comforted and strengthened.

"I am thoroughly convinced of the truth of Spiritualism, and that Mrs. Williams is one of its greatest exponents.

"Paul Tynar,  
"Reporter for New York Sun."

Charles Dana, editor of the New York *Sun*, solicited the privilege of sending Mr. Tyner to report the seance.

ESSAY ON  
MATERIALIZATION

BY

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Science of Mental Evolution, Applied  
Psychology and Kindred Subjects.

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No other department of spiritual philosophy has for the student so many attractions—or at least should have—as that dealing with materialization. To be sure it makes higher demands on the intelligence and general culture of the investigator than do the phases known as clairvoyance and clair-audience, but, when once understood and mastered, it removes all doubts and satisfies the cravings of the soul for spiritual knowledge more effectually than any other form of natural phenomena. Natural phenomena! The uninstructed will say—has the materialization of spirits anything in common with physical science? Most assuredly it has and if investigators in the aggregate were more familiar than they are with chemistry, electricity, molecular action, energy and cognate subjects there would be much less scepticism in their ranks and they would be more ready to receive and assimilate the teachings of the wise spirits who visit earth to aid us in our search after knowledge.

The very world upon which we exist and all its life, fauna and flora, came from invisible matter; all visible objects are going back, through law to invisible matter, no rest, no standing still, all permeated by the Divine energy which employs itself in

making and building up new forms of life which have their culmination in man and in whom is concentrated all that is best and highest of which that Divine energy is capable. This being admitted, need it surprise us that he is capable of revealing himself to us even after the mighty change called death? Every human being is but an intellectualized, animated and partially fluidic body. Eight-tenths of our bodies are fluids. These fluids by the action of heat can be transformed in a few moments into invisible gases. In short, the plainest thing in all nature is materialization and dematerialization. Philosophers are a unit in stating that all visible forms are composed of invisible gases and the atomic theory of the universe as first propounded by the Greek philosophers, Leukippus and Demokritus, and chemically demonstrated by Dalton in the eighteenth century is now generally accepted by those thinkers who are not to be frightened out of their senses by the terrors of an imaginary hell and the wrath of an unappeasable Deity. The nebular hypothesis of Laplace, the great French scientist, has many followers, though in my opinion if we admit law is self-existent and automatic, there never could have been a beginning to our world as we at present know it, for without the fiat of some Mind these laws would have acted on the radiant gas Laplace has postulated as the parent of the sidereal universe and according to the laws of matter our sun and his family of

planets would be dead and incapable of breeding or sustaining life trillions of years ago. No matter how you view it you cannot eliminate God from the universe.

As before intimated all reasonable people must acknowledge that this visible material world on which we now exist is the result of an energetic Intelligence, operating through law, especially that of evolution, upon invisible matter, concentrating it into visible forms that it may be tangible to our physical senses. This being admitted, is it not fair and logical to assume, in view of the facts of materialization, that this invisible Intelligence individualized as a human being can and does control matter as to be able to reappear in mortal form even though it has mounted to the highest heaven we are capable of conceiving. Under suitable conditions and in the presence of a genuine materializing medium there is no power in the universe strong enough to prevent a spirit manifesting to his or her friends, as by so doing either is marching in perfect harmony with the law of progress, which it is hardly necessary to say is also the law of God.

In the atmosphere of a suitable medium the spirit per se gathers the emanations which are polarized in the vicinity of the instrument, and by his will-power clothes himself with tangibility in order to appear to his friends, this he accomplishes with little practise, and much satisfaction, prov-

ing his identity to their physical senses, through seeing, hearing, touching, and by the mentality displayed, for after all, it's "Mind that makes the man."

There can be no question but the atoms which once were the principal parts of our bodies, and other bodies changed by death, still exist; but it is open to question whether they retain the character which they had when connected with our bodies. The theory that spirits take this invisible matter and reform it for their use in the seance room is one that has volumes of facts to sustain it—so that it is of very little consequence whether the particles which form the various parts of our bodies and the bodies of animals retain their character under all circumstances, and are used by spirits to materialize forms or not.

The question, it will be observed, which I am discussing is not as to the existence of an invisible intelligence human in its character; that I consider proved as clearly as any fact in nature, and philosophically speaking we can safely accept the hypothesis that this invisible intelligence is the manifestation of spirits that once existed in bodies as we do now. But to make it possible for them to prove the continuity of their existence and their individual personality they must find a medium whose organism is so constituted that it can be utilized for such a purpose and that such mediums are and always have

been very rare will, I think, be generally admitted. Many are called, but few are chosen, and like the poet, the medium is born, not made.

I cannot conclude this article more appropriately than by appending the following quotation from Professor John Tyndall's lecture on Elementary Magnetism.

"We have no reason to believe that the sheep or the dog, or indeed any of the lower animals, feel an interest in the laws by which natural phenomena are regulated. A herd may be terrified by a thunderstorm; birds may go to roost, and cattle return to their stalls, during a solar eclipse; but neither birds nor cattle, as far as we know, ever think of inquiring into the causes of things. It is otherwise with man. The presence of natural objects, the occurrence of natural events, the varied appearances of the universe in which he dwells, penetrate beyond his organs of sense, and appeal to an inner power of which the senses are the mere instruments and excitants. No fact is to him either original or final. He cannot limit himself to the contemplation of it alone, but endeavors to ascertain its position in a series to which uniform experience assures him it must belong."

I have merely quoted sufficient to show that Tyndall realized the something within man that must question nature and her various phenomena; that to him every apparent effect must have its appropriate

cause, but that the causeless cause will forever elude him. By realizing the spiritual source of things we can come nearer the solution of all that is than by any other means, but granted that there is no solution nor never will be for the mystery of being can any other form of belief—or rather knowledge—equal that of Spiritualism when taught by the exalted ones who cling to earth with a hope of revealing to us our glorious destiny? For it is a glorious destiny to continue through eternity a servant of truth and a champion of the light that must ultimately expel the darkness of creeds and dogmas from the minds of all who have the strength to meet and welcome the spirits in their lofty endeavor to regenerate and uplift humanity.





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